REMARKS

Claims 1, 4-10 and 14-23 are pending in the application. Claims 2-3 and 11-13 stand canceled. Claims 1 and 21 have been amended. Support for the amendments is found in at least paragraph [0049], and Fig. 2 of the application. Applicant submits that no new matter has been added to the application by the Amendment.

Interview

Applicants wish to thank Examiner Riley for the courtesy of the telephone interview conducted on February 24, 2009 in which Applicant's attorney of record explained the previously provided Proposed Amendment to Claim 1 and the concept of sharing a printer among clients connected to a network compared to the monitoring of printer working status and job status.

The Present Invention

An embodiment of the present invention comprises system which includes a plurality of clients, at least one shared printer and a print server. An attribute of the claimed system is that each printer may be individually set as a shared printer. That is, the network may be configured such that any printer which is connected to the network may be set for sharing by one or more selected clients, thereby enabling a client to print on a printer of his choosing, provided that the particular client has been designated for sharing that printer. An example of a procedure for setting a printer to be a shared printer and connecting to the shared printer including installing a driver for the printer is attached in Appendix A.

As discussed at paragraph [0005] of the published application, the concept of sharing printers on a network is not novel. Further, as discussed at paragraph [0005] of the published application, it is known that a client may be notified by e-mail that the client has been registered for sharing the printer. However, as discussed in paragraph [0005], if for some reason that the printer previously set for sharing is removed from being a shared printer, there are no means in a conventional printing system for notifying the clients that the printer has been removed as a shared printer.

One embodiment of the system is directed to a notifying unit that timely notifies the plurality of clients that sharing of a network printer has been canceled or a printer and where a

printer which can be shared has been added to the network, sends the plurality of clients the position of the program for installing the printer.

Rejection - 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 5, 7-10, 15 and 17-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 7,180,626 ("Gassho '626") in combination with U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0133152 ("Matsueda '152"), and further in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0179404 ("Matsueda '404").

A. In respect to claim 1, the Examiner asserts that the job status monitoring unit 111 disclosed by Gassho corresponds to the claimed storing unit and stores printer information; and the printer status monitoring unit 112 disclosed by Gassho corresponds to the claimed printer monitoring unit and receives the printer information. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Applicant submits that the information stored in Gassho's job status monitoring unit 111 and received by Gassho's printer status monitor unit 112 is not printer information that represents whether the printer has been set as a shared printer, as recited by claim 1.

Gassho is directed to a printing system for distributing each print job to a selected one of a plurality of printers such that a given print job is completed as quickly as possible. To accomplish this, Gassho monitors the working status of each printer 51 and the job status of each print job and directs each print job to a printer based on the working status and the job status information.

More specifically, Gassho teaches a print load distribution apparatus 80 which includes a printer status monitor unit 112 which stores the working status of each connected printer 51, and a job status monitor unit 111 which stores the congestion status of each connected printer 51. As described at col. 11, lines 30-35, the working status corresponds to, for instance, a printer failure, a paper jam or the printer being out of paper and the congestion status corresponds to the size of the print queue in the printer buffer 55 of each printer 51.

Claim 1 recites, inter alia, a storing unit which stores printer information representing whether the printer has been set as a shared printer and a printer monitor unit which receives the

printer information. Printer information which represents whether a printer has been set as a shared printer is merely a parameter, stored in the storing unit which categorizes whether a printer can be shared for printing by more than one client As discussed above and would be understood by a person of ordinary skill in the art, printer information which represents whether the working status a printer or the congestion status of a printer is not information which represents whether a printer has been set as a shared printer, as recited by amended claim 1.

The Examiner also asserts that the printer status monitoring unit 112 compares the printer information with previously stored printer information and based on this comparison, determines whether or not to cancel the sharing of the printer. The Examiner appears to be basing this assertion on steps 300-340 as shown and described by Gassho in Fig. 6 and at col. 13, line 61 to col. 14, line 48. Applicant respectfully submits that the process described at steps 300 to 340 does not disclose, teach or suggest the comparing step of claim 1.

Applicant first submits that claim 1 requires that the step of receiving printer information and the step of comparing the printer information are both performed in the claimed printer monitoring unit. The Examiner asserts (see above) that the printer status monitor unit 112 in the print load distribution apparatus 80 corresponds to the claimed printer monitoring unit. However, it is clear from the description and Fig. 6 that the steps 300-340 are performed by the printer control circuit 53 in the printer 51 and not the printer monitoring circuit 112.

Applicant further submits that the Gassho does not teach or suggest comparing "printer information" at steps 300 -340 as asserted by the Examiner, regardless of how broadly "printer information" is construed. As clearly disclosed by Gassho, the printer control circuit merely records the congestion status and the working status each time the job transmission routine is executed by the printer and does not perform any comparison. Further, step 340 of Fig. 6 merely determines whether or not a requirement signal generated by the print load distribution apparatus 80 has been received by the printer control circuit 53 and does not perform a comparison printer information representing whether a printer is set as a shared printer.

Further, even if, *arguendo,* that "printer information" is construed so broadly as to encompass all of congestion status, working status and a requirement signal, such a broad definition would not comport with the Examiner's analysis, since the Examiner's analysis

is based on the "printer information" being received and compared in the printer status monitoring unit 112 which is in the print load distribution unit 80, while in fact Gassho clearly describes that the working status is stored in the printer status monitoring unit 112 and each comparison step is performed in the printer control circuit 53 in the printer 50, 60, 70, a completely separate apparatus separate from the load distribution unit 80.

B. In respect to claim 1, the Examiner states that Gassho does not expressly disclose a notifying unit that notifies a plurality of clients that the sharing of printers has been canceled but Matsueda '152 does disclose a notifying unit 226 having the claimed features as described at Fig. 2 and paragraphs [0018]-[0020]. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Matsueda is directed to controlling access to a print job by other than the user of the originating client. Access to the print job is controlled by a server forming a memory box and a password in a selected printer in response to receiving a print job from a client. Upon the print job being accepted by the selected printer, the server provides the client with the password, i.e. authentication information, which enables the client to have access to the print job.

Applicant submits that the notifying unit 226 does not disclose, teach or suggest notifying a plurality of clients that sharing of a printer has been canceled, as recited by claim 1. Rather, as clearly described by Matsueda, notification to a client is , as described in Figs. 4 and 5 and paragraphs [0064] and [0072] after a print job is successfully transmitted to a printer and notification to a client consists of "the printer name, the location of the printer, the memory box number and if necessary the password and the like..." Alternatively, as described at paragraph [0083] and Fig. 6, if a box cannot be formed in a printer or found in a printer, the client is notified that printing can not be performed. Paragraphs [0018]-[0020] merely describe that a client is notified of whether or not a print job can be printed and not that the sharing of a print job has been canceled as recited by amended claim 1.

C. In respect to claim 1, the Examiner further asserts that Gassho as modified by Matsueda '152 does not disclose a program forming unit but Matsueda '404 discloses a program forming unit 202 which forms an installing program for use by the client 101 as described at paragraph 0036.

Paragraph [0036] merely describes element 202 as a CPU for controlling the system as corresponding to a program forming unit. Claim 1 however, recites a program forming unit which forms an installing program for use by the client and sends information indicative of the position of the installing program to the plurality of clients. An embodiment of Applicant's invention, as described at paragraphs [0074-[0080] and Fig. 5, forms an installing program for the clients when a shared printer is added and notifies the clients of the position of the installing program so that each of the clients may install a printer driver for the added shared printer. Matsueda merely identifies a password, a location of a printer where a document is stored and a box number holding the document in the printer such that a user having originated the document may print the document. The Examiner has not identified in paragraphs [0036] or [0052]-[0054], or in any part of Matsueda, any description that discloses, teaches or even suggests a notifying unit which forms an installing program for use by the client and which notifies the plurality of clients of the location of the installing program.

D. "The rationale to support a conclusion that claim would have been obvious is that all the claimed elements were known in the prior art....." (See MPEP 2142 A.) In this case, none of the references cited by the Examiner disclose, teach or suggest: (1) a print system which stores printer information representing whether a printer is set as a shared printer, (2) a notifying unit that notifies a plurality or clients that a printer has been canceled or (3) a program forming unit which forms an installing program for use by a client.

Applicant submits that the Examiner has not shown that all of the elements of claim 1 are known in the prior art. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 103 rejection of claim 1.

Claims 5, 7-10, 15 and 17-20 and 22 are allowable based at least on their dependency from allowable claim 1.

Claim 21 is allowable for the same reasons that claim 1 is allowable.

Claim 23 is allowable based at least on its dependency from allowable claim 21.

Rejection - 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 4, 6, 14 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Gassho '626 and Matsueda '152 and Matsueda '404, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,162,449 ("Drummond '449").

Claims 4, 6, 14 and 16 depend from claim 1. Drummond does not make up for the deficiencies of Gassho, Matsueda '152 and Matsueda '404 with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, claims 4, 6, 14 and 16 are allowable based at least on their dependency from allowable claim 1.

Conclusion

Insofar as the Examiner's objections and rejections have been fully addressed, the instant application including claims 1, 4-10 and 14-23 is in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the Final Rejection, formal entry of the present "Amendment After Final," and issuance of a Notice of Allowability of claims 1, 4-10 and 14-23 is therefore earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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March 1, 2010 By:
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APPENDIX I

Sharing printers

Published: August 15, 2006

Even if you have more than one computer, you don't need more than one printer. Instead, connect your computers and your printer to a home network, and you can use the printer from any computer on your network as if it were directly connected to the computer you're working on. Just be sure you leave the computer the printer is attached to turned on.

To set up printer sharing, you have to:

1. Share the printer from the computer that it is attached to.
2. Connect to the shared printer on the computer(s) that you want to print from.

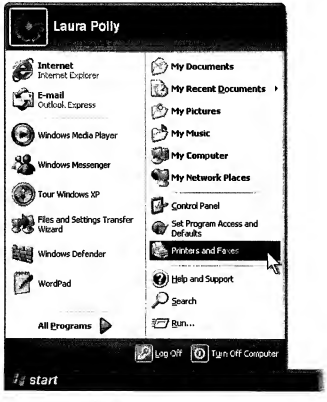
These steps are described below.

Share your printer

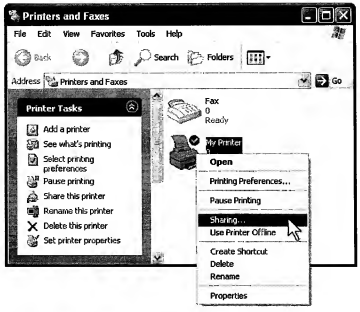
On the computer that has the printer attached

1. Log on to your computer as an administrator. For more information, see Access the administrator account from the Welcome screen.
2. Click **Start**, and then click **Printers and Faxes**.

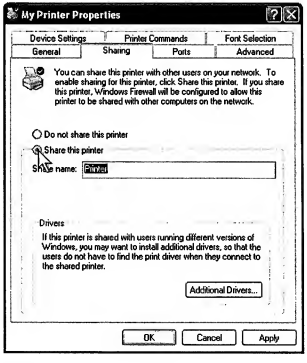
   Note: Depending on your computer settings or your version of Microsoft Windows XP, you may have to access the Printers and Faxes option through the Control Panel.



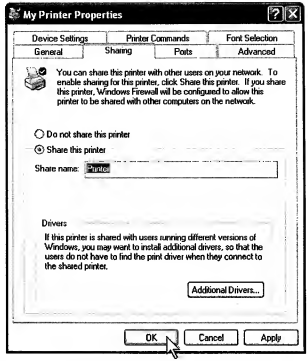
3. In the **Printers and Faxes** window, right-click your printer, and then click **Sharing**.



4. In the **My Printer Properties** dialog box, click **Share this printer**.



5. Click **OK**.



Your printer is now shared, and you are ready to connect to it from your other computer(s), as described in the next section.

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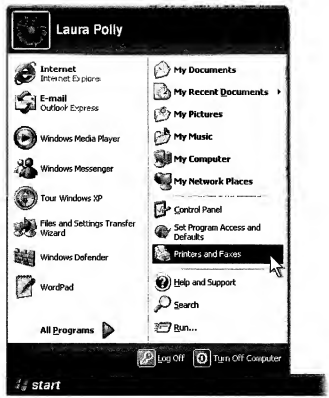
Connect to a shared printer

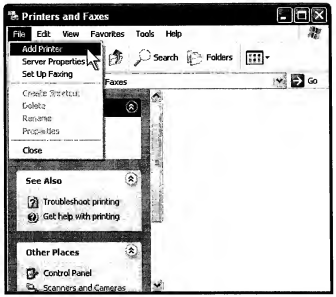
To connect to a shared printer on your home network

1. Click **Start**, and then click **Printers and Faxes.**

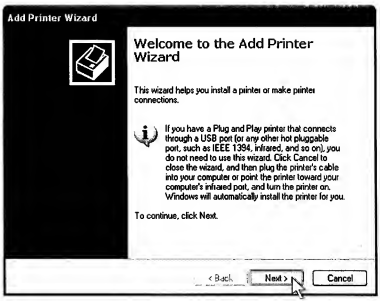
   Note: Depending on your computer settings or your version of Microsoft Windows XP, you may have to access the Printers and Faxes option through the Control Panel.



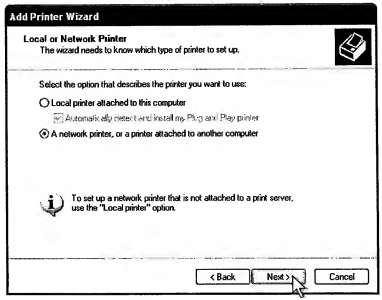
2. In the **Printers and Faxes** window, click **File**, and then click **Add Printer**.



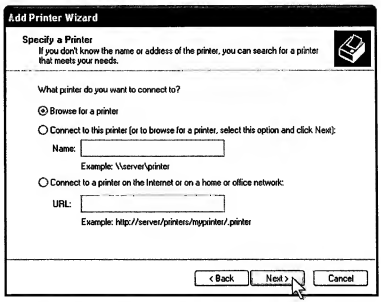
3. On the **Welcome to the Add Printer Wizard** page, click **Next**.



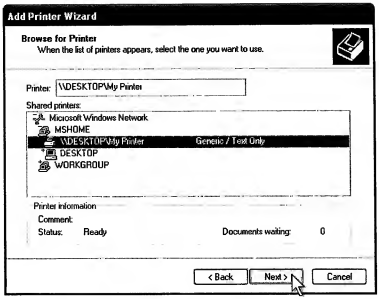
4. On the **Local or Network Printer** page, click **A network printer, or a printer attached to another computer**, and then click **Next**.



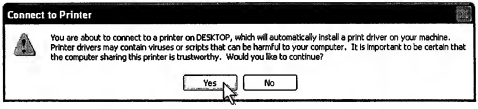
5. On the **Specify a Printer** page, click **Browse for a printer**, and then click **Next**.



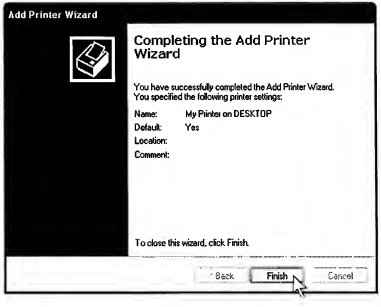
6. On the **Browse for Printer** page, under **Microsoft Windows Network**, expand any groups you see by clicking the plus sign next to the group name. Then select your printer. Click **Next**.



7. In the **Connect to Printer** dialog box, click **Yes**.



8. On the **Completing the Add Printer Wizard** page, click **Finish**.



You are now ready to print to the network printer, just as you would to a printer that is attached directly to your computer.

Repeat these steps for each computer on your home network to connect them to the shared printer.

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